



Walkability Checklist

Everyone benefits from walking. But walking needs to be safe and easy. Take a walk with your child and use this checklist to decide if your neighborhood is a friendly place to walk. If you find problems, there are ways you can make things better.

Getting started: Pick a place to walk, like the route to school, a friend's house, or just somewhere fun to go. Read over the checklist before you go, and as you walk, note the locations of things you would like to change. At the end of your walk, circle an overall rating for each question. Then add up the numbers to see how you rated your walk.

Rating scale 1 = awful 4 = good
2 = many problems 5 = very good
3 = some problems 6 = excellent

1. Did you have enough room to walk safely?



Rating 1 2 3 4 5 6

☐ Yes ☐ Some problems:

- ☐ Sidewalks or paths started and stopped
- ☐ Sidewalks were broken or cracked
- ☐ Sidewalks were blocked with poles, signs, dumpsters, etc.
- ☐ No sidewalks, paths, or shoulders
- ☐ Too much traffic
- ☐ Something else? _____

Locations of problems: _____

2. Was it easy to cross streets?



Rating 1 2 3 4 5 6

☐ Yes ☐ Some problems:

- ☐ Road was too wide
- ☐ Traffic signals made us wait too long or did not give us enough time to cross
- ☐ Needed striped crosswalks or traffic signals
- ☐ Parked cars blocked our view of traffic
- ☐ Trees or plants blocked our view of traffic
- ☐ Needed curb ramps or ramps needed repair
- ☐ Something else? _____

Locations of problems: _____

3. Did drivers behave well?



Rating 1 2 3 4 5 6

☐ Yes ☐ Some problems:

- Drivers . . .
- ☐ Backed out of driveways without looking
 - ☐ Did not yield to people crossing street
 - ☐ Turned into people crossing streets
 - ☐ Drove too fast
 - ☐ Sped up to make it through traffic lights or drove through red lights
 - ☐ Something else? _____

Locations of problems: _____

4. Was it easy to follow safety rules?



Rating 1 2 3 4 5 6

Could you and your child ...

Yes No

- ☐ ☐ Cross at crosswalks or where you could see and be seen by drivers?
- ☐ ☐ Stop and look left, right, and left again before crossing streets?
- ☐ ☐ Walk on sidewalks, or shoulders (if no sidewalks), facing traffic?
- ☐ ☐ Cross with the light?

Locations of problems: _____

5. Was your walk pleasant?



Rating 1 2 3 4 5 6

- ☐ Yes ☐ Some unpleasant things:
 - ___ Needs more grass, flowers, or trees
 - ___ Scary dogs
 - ___ Suspicious activity
 - ___ Not well lit
 - ___ Dirty, lots of litter or trash
 - ___ Something else? _____

Locations of problems: _____

How does your neighborhood stack up? **Add up your ratings and decide.**



1 _____
 2 _____
 3 _____
 4 _____
 5 _____
 () = total

How did your neighborhood rate?

26 - 30 Celebrate! You have a great neighborhood for walking.



21 - 25 Celebrate a little. Your neighborhood is pretty good.

16 - 20 Okay, but it needs work.



11 - 15 It needs lots of work. You deserve better than that.

5 - 10 Call out the National Guard before you walk. It's a disaster area.



Did You Find Something That Needs to be Changed?

The next page has suggestions for making neighborhoods better places for walking that match up with the problems you identified.

During your walk **how did you feel physically?** Could you go as far or as fast as you wanted? Were you short of breath, tired, or did you have sore feet or muscles? The next page also has suggestions about walking for exercise.



MAKING YOUR COMMUNITY MORE WALKABLE



You have collected valuable information about walking in your neighborhood. Listed below are some suggestions for making it easier to walk in your community. Your local traffic engineer may be the key person to contact about many of the things you want to change.

But before you do, learn about ideas other communities are trying. A new concept called traffic calming is transforming neighborhood streets from roads that encourage speeding to places that invite people to walk.

What you and your child can do IMMEDIATELY

What you and your community can do with more time

1. Did you have room to walk safely?



Sidewalks or paths started and stopped

Sidewalks broken/cracked

Sidewalks blocked

No sidewalks, paths or shoulder

Too much traffic

- Pick another route for now
- Tell local transportation engineers or public works department about specific problems, and provide a copy of checklist

- Speak up at board/development meetings
- Write or petition the city for walkways
- Gather neighborhood signatures
- Make media aware of problem

2. Was it easy to cross streets?



Road too wide

Traffic signals made us wait too long or did not give us enough time to cross

Crosswalks/traffic signals needed

View of traffic blocked by parked cars, trees, or plants

Needed curb ramps; ramp needed repair

- Pick another route for now
- Share problems and checklist with local transportation engineers or public works department
- Trim your trees and bushes that block the street, and ask neighbors to do the same
- Leave nice notes on problem cars, asking owners not to park there

- Push for crosswalks, signals, or parking changes at city meetings
- Give report identifying parked cars that are safety hazards to transportation engineer
- Report illegally parked cars to the police
- Request that public works department trims trees and plants
- Make media aware of problem

What you and your child can do IMMEDIATELY

What you and your community can do with more time



3. Did drivers behave well?

Backed without looking
Did not yield
Turned into walkers
Drove too fast
Sped up to make traffic lights
or drove through red lights

- Pick another route for now
- Set an example: slow down and be considerate of walkers
- Encourage your neighbors to do the same
- Report unsafe driving to police

- Organize neighborhood speed watch program
- Petition for more enforcement
- Ask city planners and traffic engineers for traffic calming ideas
- Request protected turn signals
- Ask schools about getting crossing guards at key locations where children cross



4. Could you follow safety rules?

Cross at crosswalks
or where you could see
and be seen
Stop and look left, right, left
before crossing
Walk on sidewalks or shoulders
facing traffic (if no sidewalks)
Cross with the light

- Educate yourself about safe walking and teach your child
- Organize parents in your neighborhood to walk children to school

- Encourage schools to teach pedestrian safety
- Help schools start **Safe Routes to School** programs
- Encourage corporate support for flex schedules so parents can walk children to school



5. Was your walk pleasant?

Needs grass,
flowers, trees
Scary dogs
Suspicious activity
Not well lit
Dirty, littered

- Pick another route for now
- Ask neighbors to keep dogs leashed or fenced
- Report scary dogs to animal control department
- Report suspicious activity to police
- Report lighting needs to the city
- Take a walk with a trash bag
- Plant trees, flowers, and bushes in your yard

- Request increased police enforcement
- Start a crime-watch program in your neighborhood.
- Organize a community clean-up day
- Sponsor a tree planting day
- Sponsor a neighborhood beautification day

Quick health check



Could not go as far or
as fast as you wanted
Were tired, short of breath, or
had sore feet or muscles

- Start with short walks and work up to 30 minutes of walking most days
- Invite a friend or child along
- Replace some driving trips with walking trips

- Get media to do a story about the health benefits of walking
- Call parks and recreation department about community walks
- Encourage corporate support for employee walking programs

Contact List

Street Design and **Traffic Calming**

Federal Highway Administration

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Research Program
HSR-20

6300 Georgetown Pike

McLean, VA 22101

Web site: www.tfhr.org

National Bicycle and Pedestrian Clearinghouse

Campaign to Make America Walkable

1506 21st Street, NW

Suite 200

Washington, DC 20036

Phone: (800) 760-NBPC

Web site: www.bikefed.org

Websites related to **traffic calming and street design**

Institute of Transportation Engineers

www.ite.org

Surface Transportation Policy Project

www.transact.org

Transportation for Livable Communities

www.tlcnetwork.org

Accessible **Sidewalks**

US Access Board

1331 F Street, NW

Suite 1000

Washington, DC 20004-1111

Phone: (800) 872-2253; (800) 993-2822 (TTY)

Web site: www.access-board.gov

Safer, More Attractive **Neighborhoods**

National Crime Prevention Council

1700 K Street, NW

Second Floor

Washington, DC 20006-3817

Phone: (202) 466-6272

Web site: www.ncpc.org

National Arbor Day Foundation

100 Arbor Avenue

Nebraska City, NE 68410

Phone: (402) 474-5655

Web site: www.arborday.org

Partnership for a Walkable America

National Safety Council

1121 Spring Lake Drive

Itasca, IL 60143-3201

Phone: (630) 285-1121

Web site: www.nsc.org

Pedestrian **Safety**

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Traffic Safety Programs
400 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590
Phone: (202) 366-0910
Web site: www.nhtsa.dot.gov

National SAFE KIDS Campaign

1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20004-1707
Phone: (202) 662-0600
Web site: www.safekids.org

Safest Route to School Program

Contact local AAA Club
(ask for publications: #3201, #3212,
#3213, and #3320)

Prevention Magazine's Walking Club

33 East Minor street
Emmaus, PA 18098

Shape Up America!

6707 Democracy Boulevard
Suite 306
Bethesda, MD 20817
Web site: www.shapeup.org

Walk a Child to School Program

Walking Magazine
9-11 Harcourt Street
Boston, MA 02116
Phone: (800) 266-3312

Walking and **Health**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity
Phone: (888) 232-4674
Web site:
www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/readysat

